

HEALTH
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DULVERTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and the

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

YEAR 1958.





St. Peter Street,

TIVERTON.

Devon.

To: The Chairman & Members of the
Dulverton Rural District Council.

Madam Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Report on the health of the Dulverton
Rural District during the year 1958.

The headings are those formulated by the Ministry of
Health.

G. NICHOLSON.

Medical Officer of Health.

JUNE, 1959.

Chairman: The Hon. Mrs. M. G. Herbert, Pixton, Dulverton.

Vice Chairman: Mr. I. J. Kemp, Dulverton.

Mr. B. A. Hobhouse.
Mrs. T. Robinson.
Mr. A. B. Smallridge.
Mr. W. G. Bryant.
Mr. G. C. Sweetland.
Mrs. M. B. Bovill.
Mr. C. Denscombe.
Mr. H. Brentnall.
Miss M. Aston.
Maj. M. P. Morris.

Brig. A. E. Snow.
Mr. H. S. Holman.
Mr. J. Hayes.
Mr. F. T. Barrow.
Mr. J. Richards.
Mr. D. C. Clapp
Capt. E. A. Gibbs. R.N.(Ret'd)
Miss B. K. Abbot.
Mr. A. Herbert.

Clerk to the Council: R. W. Halse Esq., Solicitor.

Public Health Officers for the District:

Dr. G. Nicholson, M.D.,D.P.H.,F.R.C.S.,E. (Part time M.O.H.)

Public Health Inspector & Surveyor. - Mr. H. A. Jewell A.R.S.H.,A.I.P.H.E.,
(Retired 31/7/58)

Public Health Inspector & Surveyor. - Mr. R. J. Organ, A.R.S.H.,M.A.P.H.I.,A.I.P.H.E.
(Appointed 1/8/58)

Clerk Miss E. Harris. (Appointed 7/7/58)

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STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area in acres.....	78,159
Population 1953 (estimated).....	4,420.
Inhabited Houses.....	1,484.
Number of inhabited houses as per rate books.....	1,484.
Number of families or separate occupiers.....	1,493.
Sum produced by 1d rate.....	£134.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS.

Good. The vast majority of the inhabitants are engaged in agricultural pursuits and appear to be exceptionally healthy in consequence.

EXTRACT FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1958.

	Total	Male	Female
Live Births Legitimate 	63	39	24
Live Births Illegitimate... 	1	1	-
Deaths from all causes 	45	25	20
Still Births 	-	-	-
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population:	14.4.		
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	10.1.		
Corrected Death Rate. 	9.7.		
Corrected Birth Rate 	16.4.		

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER AGE OF ONE YEAR.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
Legitimate.....	1	1	-
Illegitimate.....	-	-	-
Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age.....	1	1	-
Deaths from Measles.....	-	-	-
Deaths from Whooping Cough.....	-	-	-
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years).....	-	-	-
Deaths from Diarrhoea (infants under 4 weeks)....	-	-	-
Number of women dying of or in consequence of childbirth.	-	-	-

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

See Public Health Inspector's Report.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Measles was unduly prevalent during the latter part of the year.

VACCINATIONS.

Vaccinations carried out by the Medical Officer of Health during 1958. Nil.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS)

	<u>Total Cases</u> <u>Notified</u>	<u>Cases admitted</u> <u>to Hospital</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Small Pox	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Measles	31	-	-
Whooping Cough	10	-	-
Puerperal pyrexia	-	-	-
Pneumonia	7	-	3
Other Diseases notifiable locally:			
Chicken Pox	-	-	-
Erysipelas... ..	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Dysentery	-	-	-
Anthrax	-	-	-

Deaths from Cancer: Stomach 2, Breast 1 other regions 3

Total 6.

This is a rise compared with the figure of 3 in 1957.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

No action was taken.

HOUSING.

No Houses were erected by the Local Authority during the year but two Houses and 8 bungalows are contemplated for 1959.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

1. Nursing in the Home.

(a) Nursing is provided by the Somerset District Nursing Association.
There is no co-ordination with the Sanitary Authority.

(b) Home Helps.

All home help services are controlled by the Somerset County Council.
It operates in the district giving attention to chronic sick and maternity services. The Staff consists of four visiting women and occasionally a resident home help is sent in special cases.

(c) Infectious Diseases.

No provision.

2. Midwives.

None employed or subsidised by the Local Authority. Number practising in the area - 6.

3. Arrangements for the carrying out of Pathological and Bacteriological Investigations, Analysis of Foodstuffs etc., are made at the Somerset County Laboratory.



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4. Hospitals.
There are no hospitals of any description within the area.
Hospital accommodation for Infectious Diseases - No change.
5. Maternity and Nursing Homes.
No action has been taken under the Nursing Home Act of 1927.
Cases of Maternal Mortality and Puerperal Pyrexia are investigated by the County Authority.
6. Institutional Provisions for the care of mental Defectives.
None in the area.
7. Diphtheria Immunisations and Vaccinations.
Procedure administered by the County Council are carried out at a clinic or by the local doctors at their surgeries.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1. Water Supply.
Nine of the largest villages have a main supply. Samples were taken by the Public Health Inspector in various parishes during the year and the result of these are set out in his report.
2. Drainage.
Dulverton, Brushford and Exford have modern sewage works. Winsford, Brompton Regis and Withypool have no main drainage. The Council should give consideration to this problem.
3. Rivers and Streams Pollution.
No action was considered necessary.
4. Closet Accommodation.
Improvements in the scattered cottages are constantly being made and every encouragement is given to do this. Many new septic tanks have been installed during the year.
5. Schools.
Brompton Regis, Dulverton, Exford, Withypool, Winsford, Huish Champflower and Brushford all have flush lavatories. Exton has a piped water supply and a scheme has now been approved for the provision of flush lavatories. A self contained canteen was opened at the Dulverton Secondary Modern School in September.
6. Public Cleansing.
See Public Health Inspector's Report.
7. Sanitary Inspection of the area.
See Public Health Inspector's Report.
8. Eradication of Bedbugs.
No action has been required up to the present.

TUBERCULOSIS

Age Periods	<u>New cases during 1958</u>				<u>Mortality</u>			
	<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary.</u>		<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>	
	M	F.	M.	F	M	F	M	F
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	x-
25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Tuberculosis (Cont'd)

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1952 - No action
Public Health Act, 1925, (Section 62). No action taken.

My thanks are due to Mr. Organ for his assistance in compiling
this Report and also for his co-operation throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE NICHOLSON. M.O.H.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR FOR THE
YEAR 1958.

PREFACE.

Madam Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the period 1st January to 31st December, 1958.

The pages which follow indicate the multifarious nature of the duties carried out by the Department.

The slight reduction in the number of visits carried out during the year is due to the consequent reduction in staff following the retirement of my predecessor in July. This being a combined post there are occasions particularly during summer months when the majority of ones time is taken up with the maintenance of water supplies etc and it is not always possible to devote as much time as one would sometimes desire to the day to day routine public health work of the department. The Council's decision to employ the services of an outside Architect for proposed new schemes was welcomed.

It is hoped that economic conditions will improve in the not too far distant future so as to enable the Council to embark on Sewerage Schemes in at least two villages where existing arrangements are by no means satisfactory.

My thanks are expressed to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Public Health & Housing Committees for the support and understanding and also to my Clerk, the Medical Officer of Health and to the Clerk and his staff for their co-operation in the work of the department.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

R. J. ORGAN.

Public Health Inspector & Surveyor.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1958.

Inspections carried out by Officers of the Department during the year totalled 1,646 and the details below indicate the multifarious nature of these duties:-

Council Houses (Repairs).....	189
Council Houses (Management).....	18
Housing Inspections.....	13
Housing Re-Inspections.....	66
Nuisances and Complaints.....	66
Verminous Premises.....	1
Infectious Diseases.....	2
Inspection of Dairies.....	5
Visits to Food Premises.....	27
Visits in connection with Meat inspections.....	148
Factories.....	6
Moveable Dwellings.....	31
Visits in connection with proposed new drainage.....	102
Visits in connection with alterations and improvements to properties.....	348
Petroleum Regulations.....	37
Visits in Connection with Rodent Control (excluding operators visits)	4
Refuse Collection & Disposal.....	26
Routine Visits to Sewage Works.....	152
Visits in connection with water supplies (Main & Private supplies)	381
Miscellaneous Visits.....	24
	<u>1,646</u>

HOUSING.

(a) Council Houses.

No new Council Houses were completed during the year. At the end of the year schemes were however being prepared for the erection of two traditional type houses at Simonsbath and eight "Unity" type bungalows on a site at Jury Road, Dulverton.

The Council now own 209 houses, the maintenance of which is the responsibility of this department and apart from external painting all repairs are carried out by a small direct labour force. Internal decorations are carried out only on a charge of Tenancy.

(b) Action under Housing Acts.

During the year the Council accepted two undertakings from owners that houses would not be again used for Human habitation until such time as they were made fit to the satisfaction of the Council. No demolition orders were made during the year but two houses subject of order made previously were demolished.

Five private dwelling houses were erected and at the end of the year a further two properties were in the course of erection. The total number of houses erected in the district from the 1st April, 1945 to the 31st December 1958 is as follows:

Local Authority	133
Private Enterprise	42

Five Council Houses were sold during the year.

Improvement Grants.

Four applications were received of which three were approved and one rejected. The total amount of grant payable by the Local Authority was
£511 12s 6d.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

Licences under Section 269 under the Public Health Act 1936 were issued in respect of two Caravan sites following the granting of permission under the Town & Country Planning Act. The number of caravans covered by the licences were seven and one respectively, both licences being subject to certain conditions. At the latter end of the year the site containing seven caravans was vacated and the licence surrendered. Frequent visits were paid to the sites and in both cases the general standards could be regarded as satisfactory.

During the past the control of moveable dwellings has caused little or no difficulty in this area but with the increasing popularity of this area for touring holidays it seems obvious that more time will have to be devoted to this branch of the work if all sites are to be properly licenced and controlled.

WATER SUPPLIES.

(a) Public Supplies.

Sampling of all main supplies at regular intervals for Bacteriological examination was continued throughout the year, samples being collected from spring heads, reservoirs and points along the supply main.

Such samples are sent by passenger train to the Public Health Laboratory at Taunton and the results obtained are indicated below.

Supply.	No. of Samples submitted for Bacteriological Examination.	Number found satisfactory	Number unsatisfactory
Dulverton & Brushford.	9	9	-
Exford.	5	4	1
Winsford.	3	3	-
Withypool.	4	4	-
Brompton Regis.	4	3	1
Skilgate.	5	5	-
Huish Champflower.	5	5	-
Total	35	33	2

The figure in the last column above indicates the number of samples which failed to reach the very high standard laid down for a public water supply but in both cases the "count" was very small and the water could still be regarded as being fit for domestic and drinking purposes.

In addition to the samples taken for Bacteriological examination one sample from each of the Council's main supplies was submitted to the County Analyst for chemical examination, the result in each case being satisfactory.

All the larger villages now have pipe water supplies. There is an automatic hardening plant at Hollam Dulverton which serves the Dulverton, Brushford and Exebridge supplies in addition to the bulk supply for that part of Exebridge which is within the area of the N.Devon Water Board. At this plant the p.H. value is raised from 6.4 to 8.0. Chlorination is also dealt with by the same plant.

Springs were very low for a period of several weeks during the summer but there was no acute shortage as in some previous years and no restrictions were imposed as to the use of hose-pipes etc.

During the year work on the additional reservoir at Skilgate was completed and without this scheme it is obvious that severe restrictions would have to have been imposed in this village.

The scheme to augment the Dulverton, Brushford and Exebridge supplies received the Minister's approval and work on it was practicably completed at the end of the year. With this scheme in operation there should not be any serious water shortage in Dulverton for several years to come.

It is felt that a similar scheme may in due course be required to augment the Exford supply. A present trend however is for smaller water authorities such as this to be absorbed by Water Boards but it is not yet known if or when any such action may be taken in this area.

(b) Private Supplies.

Throughout the year numerous samples were taken from private supplies in the district. Several requests were received for samples to be taken prior to the implementation of new supplies to farms under grant aided schemes. In such cases samples are taken and a small charge is made to cover part cost of travelling etc.

Samples taken from a well supplying a farm in the district indicates the water to be grossly polluted and an informal notice was served on the owner. A scheme was in course of preparation at the end of the year.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

The main Sewage disposal works at Dulverton, Brushford and Exford continued to work satisfactorily.

The Dulverton and Brushford works received regular attention and are kept in a good state of repair by the Council's staff. In the case of the works at Exford it will be appreciated that these are 10 miles distant from Dulverton and there are occasions when due to extreme pressure of other work it is only possible to visit Exford two or three times a week. I am of the opinion that if these works are to be properly managed and the standard of effluent properly kept it is imperative that they receive daily attention and it is to be hoped that the Council will in the near future consider employing part time labour resident in the village in order to achieve this. In addition to the main scheme the Council are also responsible for the maintenance of septic tanks serving Council Houses in some of the outlying villages and apart from pumping out operations which is undertaken by contractors most of this work is done by direct labour.

The Council make regular collections of house refuse from villages within the district. Collections vary from fortnightly to once every two months except in the large conurbations of Dulverton, Exford and Brushford where weekly collections are made. It is becoming increasingly obvious that even in a rural area six weekly and two monthly collections are insufficient and it is to be hoped that when considering programmes for future years the Council will find it possible to increase the monthly services to other parishes.

During the year the refuse collection service was extended to include an area beyond Brompton Regis, Withiel Floroy and Armour Lane etc and there is no doubt that this extension was much appreciated by residents in this area who hitherto had no collection whatever.

The Diesol refuse lorry of 10cy. capacity purchased in 1957 continued to give good service. About 7,000 miles are covered annually with this lorry in very hilly country and it is interesting to note that from experience we have found the diesol engine has a great advantage over the petrol driven vehicle both from running costs, general upkeep and reliability. Throughout the year the vehicle averaged 15 miles to the gallon and in view of the work carried out this can be considered extremely satisfactory.

All refuse after collection is brought to a central incinerator at the Dulverton Sewage Works. Tins are sorted and electrically baled and other metals are sold. Only ashes and non-combustible materials such as glass etc are taken to the tip at Oldways End.

The market for baled destructor scrap dropped considerably during the year and a large amount was allowed to accumulate.

INSPECTION OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES.

(a) Milk and Dairies.

The District Council's responsibility applies to the enforcement of the Milk & Dairies Regulations in relation to distributors of milk, for the registration of dairies which are not dairy farms and of milk distributors who are not dairy farmers. The inspection and registration of cowsheds is the responsibility of the Agricultural Executive Committee.

Routine inspections of distributors premises were made during the year and conditions were found to be generally satisfactory. Sampling of milk for schools is carried out by the County Council and any unsatisfactory results forwarded.

Number of Registered Dairy Premises.	5.
" " " Distributors of Milk	6.
Dealers licences issued in respect of T.T. milk	6.
Dealers licences issued in respect of	
Pasteurised milk.	1.
Dealers licences issued in respect of	
Sterilised milk.	Nil.

(b) Ice-Cream.

There are no premises within the district registered for the manufacture of ice-cream but sixteen vendors are registered under the Food & Drugs Act for the storage and sale of Ice-Cream only. Most of the Ice-Cream sold is pre-wrapped and all retailers have satisfactory conservators.

(c) Food Premises, Cafes Etc.

The number of food premises in the district are as follows:-

Grocers & General Stores.	16.
Dutchers.	3.
Bakehouses.	2.

(c) Food Premises, Cafes etc. (Con't)

Cafe's & Restaurants.	6
Hotels and other catering establishments	9
Fried Fish & Chip Shops.	Nil
School Kitchens.	10
Confectioners.	<u>2</u>
Total	<u>48</u>

Routine inspections were made during the year but it is hoped that it may be possible to devote more time to this very important subject in future years.

Informal Action was taken in five cases and improvements carried out to conform to the Regulations.

The owners of one shop in the district were asked to improve the general cleanliness and to effect numerous improvements and it was not until the Council threatened legal action that the work was carried out.

(a) Meat and Other Foods.

The two slaughterhouses in the district were licenced for a further period of 12 months. Both premises are however far below standard and extensive works will have to be carried out in the comparatively near future if further licences are to be granted.

The number of Animals inspected and the meat found unfit for human consumption was as follows:-

	<u>Bovines.</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Pigs.</u>	<u>Horses.</u>
Number Killed.	172	8	876	32	Nil
Number inspected.	168	8	862	32	Nil
Weight of Meat Condemned (in lbs) for:-					
(a) Tuberculosis.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(b) Cysticercosis.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(c) Other.	54 $\frac{1}{4}$	Nil	15	Nil	Nil

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Detailed investigations were carried out in connection with infectious diseases notified by the Medical Officer of Health. In all cases advice was given regarding precautions to be taken and the need for high standards of hygiene. Terminal disinfections was carried out in two cases.

RODENT CONTROL.

The Council employ a full time Inspector/Operator. All farms in the district are inspected at regular intervals and it is found this procedure tends to keep the obligation of the occupier under The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act well to the fore.

Although not required by the act to service agricultural land and buildings the Council have undertaken to carry out this work on a Contract basis.

Business premises requiring treatments and not wishing to avail themselves of an annual contract are treated at cost price. Dwelling houses are serviced free of charge.

Routine test Dating of sewers and of other property owned by the Council was carried out during the year but no major infestations were found.

The following table gives some indication of the work carried out under the act for the 12 months ended 31st March, 1958.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY.				5. Total.
	Non-Agricultural.			Agricultural	
	Local Authority.	2. Dwelling.	3 All other all business.	4. Agricultural.	
1. Number of properties in.	15.	1,138.	85.	410.	1,648.
2. Number of properties inspected as a result of					
(a) Notification.	Nil	37.	20.	33.	90.
(b) Survey under the Act.	15	20	41	317.	393.
(c) Otherwise (e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose.	-	60.	24.	19.	103.
3. Total inspections carried out including re-inspections:	60.	264.	159.	1,287.	1,790.
4. Number of properties inspected in (Sec.2) which were found to be infested by Rats:					
Mice:	6	46.	21.	203.	276.
	1.	29.	7.	21.	58.
4. Number of infested properties created by Local Authority.	10	61.	26	111	208.

INSPECTION OF FACTORIES.

Particulars of premises registered under the Factories Act 1957, details of inspections made and action taken are as follows:

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspector).

Premises. (1)	Number on Registers. (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	1			Nil
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	19	6		Nil
(3) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises)				
Total.	20	6		Nil

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars. (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found.			Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.	
	Found. (2).	Remedied (3)	Referred. to H.M. Inspector. (4)	By H.M. Inspector. (5)	(6)
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	1	1			
Overcrowding. (S.2)	Nil				
Unreasonable temperature.	Nil				
Inadequate ventilation (S.4).	Nil.				
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	Nil.				
Sanitary Conveniences (a) Insufficient.	1	1			
(b) Unsuitable or defective.	-	-			
(c) Not separate for sexes.	-	-			
Other offences against the (Act not including offences relating to Outwork)	-	-			
	2	2.			

GENERALMATTERS.

Action taken in connection with miscellaneous matters not already mentioned in the Report were as follows:-

Defective Drainage ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17.
Defective Cess Pits...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7.
Offensive Accumulation	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.
Fouled Watercourses...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Dirty Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Bad or suspected water supply	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.
Overcrowding...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Animals kept in unfit premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Defective Sanitary Conveniences		...	...	...	...	...	21.
Housing Complaints ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20.
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	<u>11.</u>
							<u>95.</u>

